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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

SEP. 13 1937 ☆

September Miscellany

A radio interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Morse Salisbury, Office of Information, broadcast Wednesday, September 29, 1937, in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 69 associated radio stations.

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MR. SALISBURY: Here we are in Washington. And although this is Wednesday not Thursday, Ruth Van Deman is here to give you her weekly report from the Bureau of Home Economics. Ruth, I hope this change in schedule hasn't balled up your week.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Oh, no. Not at all, Morse. All these fall days are so busy - that it doesn't much matter.

MR. SALISBURY: One's as bad as another.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Or as good, depending on how much you can see accomplished in that particular 24 hours. Along with everybody else, I'm trying to get the house in order for winter. First came the paper hangers, then the painters. There are still floors to be done over and curtains to be cleaned and hung.

MR. SALISBURY: Takes a lot of time; and follow up.

MISS VAN DEMAN: It certainly does. Then everyday down at the Department there's something new breaking in our home economics work. I sometimes feel about like one of those mountain goats I saw out in the Rockies this summer, leaping from crag to crag, to keep up with it all.

MR. SALISBURY: Well, what crag do we land on first today?

MISS VAN DEMAN: A summer cabin being closed for the season. A friend up in New Hampshire wants to know if the Department of Agriculture can tell her how to keep the field mice out of her cottage in the mountains. They got in last winter and tore up her mattresses - romped all through her house and had a high old time.

MR. SALISBURY: Did you tell her to sprinkle around quantities of naphthalene flakes?

MISS VAN DEMAN: I did, Morse. Evidently you've consulted our friend, Howard Zahniser, over in Biological Survey, too.

MR. SALISBURY: Yep. Howard, the scourge of the field mouse tribe.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, the Biological Survey people say to scatter several pounds of the naphthalene flakes all around in the cottage just as you're closing it for the winter. Sprinkle the flakes over the mattresses and rugs and floors - wherever the field mice are likely to run and do damage.

MR. SALISBURY: And don't be worried when the house looks as though a snow storm had hit it. Naphthalene flakes begin to evaporate immediately. They'll all be gone by spring. But you have to have plenty to make a strong smell to keep off those hungry little rodents.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Morse, I'm afraid you don't feel about the field mouse the way our poet friend Robert Burns did - remember - "Wee timorous cowering beastie!"

MR. SALISBURY: "Wee sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie", Ruth. I do remember. I learned that poem once in school.

MISS VAN DEMAN: And recited it I hope with the proper Scotch burr in your tongue.

MR. SALISBURY: I'm sure I didn't. I do remember some of the lines, but I remember a lot better the damage done by some field mice who have been uninvited guests in the Salisbury household.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Plenty Scotch about that.

MR. SALISBURY: Plenty.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, I don't blame you. So is my friend in New Hampshire. She Doesn't want to feed the field mice any more either. By the way I cautioned her to go through the pantry and cupboards and see that every bit of food was boxed or bottled up in tin or glass. These mice when they get hungry in mid-winter will gnaw right into paper cartons and wooden boxes. And they'll eat candles or cake paraffin or even soap.

MR. SALISBURY: You bet they will. And I hope you didn't forget to warn her about the drainpipes and the fireplace and chimneys. All those openings need to be plugged up, mouse tight.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, I put that in. Now jumping on the next topic, Morse, in our September miscellany. Here's somebody asking about the kind of pan for roasting meat. A listener writes to say we picture on the cover of our beef leaflet an open sheet iron pan. She wants to know about other pans, and must they always be open.

MR. SALISBURY: How about that? I've wondered myself.

MISS VAN DEMAN: For tender roasts with a good covering of fat on the outside, we do recommend an open pan. It needs a rack for the meat to rest on. But no lid. And the pan itself can be any one of several kinds of material.

MR. SALISBURY: Aluminum or tin?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, we use them all. I sent her a copy of our "Meat Dishes at Low Cost." It has a picture of a stuffed breast of lamb in an open enamel ware pan. There's a rack under the meat to keep it from sticking to the bottom and to let the air circulate around and under the meat and help it to cook more evenly. And we often use aluminum pans and sometimes heavy tin ones. For combinations like hamburger on onion rings, we like to cook them in a shallow glass dish, so you can serve the food in that same dish. They look better that way.

MR. SALISBURY: Well, you seem to be very open minded about your pans.



MISS VAN DEMAN: Very. When the meat is a tender, fat cut. But when it's one of the tough cuts, then we advise a closed pan. That kind of meat needs a cover to hold in the steam to help make it tender.

MR. SALISBURY: Like a Dutch oven for pot roasts.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Morse, I think you've practically absorbed those pictures on "Meat Dishes at Low Cost."

MR. SALISBURY: What else do you expect a hungry man to do when you bring them up here around lunch time?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Not very diplomatic of me I know, just to wave a picture of food under your nose. And here's something else - hot muffins.

MR. SALISBURY: Oh boy, what couldn't I do to some hot muffins and butter.

MISS VAN DEMAN: The same thing you did to those watermelon pickles, I guess.

MR. SALISBURY: I wasn't a patch on Roy Hendrickson, you remember.

MISS VAN DEMAN: I do.

MR. SALISBURY: But go ahead with your muffins. I can take it.

MISS VAN DEMAN: This lady wants to know about the new method of mixing muffins. She says she's been making muffins for her family for the last 25 years, but she's never too old to learn something new and better.

MR. SALISBURY: That's the spirit. What is new in mixing muffins?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, Dr. King and Mrs. Freeman of the Bureau of Home Economics say to add all the dry ingredients to a muffin mixture at once. Sift the flour and baking powder and salt all together, and then pour that dry mixture right on to the top of the milk and eggs and melted fat. Stir the muffin batter just enough to moisten the dry ingredients. Don't beat it to make it smooth. That develops the gluten in the flour too much, and makes the muffins coarse-grained and tough. Even if you leave some lumps in the batter when it goes into the oven, they'll bake out. Over mixing is definitely bad for muffins. It makes them have humps and hooks on top and tunnels inside. Morse, I'm sure you've noticed muffins like that.

MR. SALISBURY: Of course I have. But it hadn't occurred to me to ask how they got that way. I'll remember now, too much mixing.

MISS VAN DEMAN: That's right.

MR. SALISBURY: Ruth, does that new baking bulletin that came out this summer while you were away tell all about this new muffin technique?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, it does, and I'm glad you mentioned it. I've forgotten to say a word about that since I came back. Yes, the very latest information we have about making breads - yeast breads as well as quick breads - and cake and pastry is in that new bulletin.

MR. SALISBURY: And the title if I remember right is, "Homemade Bread, Cake, and Pastry."

MISS VAN DEMAN: That's right.

MR. SALISBURY: Well, Ruth, I guess we'll have to call it a day. I wanted to ask you about something you mentioned last week - the weekly food budget for that young couple. How the rise in food prices is affecting it. But that can wait.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, if you don't mind we'll let that go over until next week, and then I'll bring along Dr. Stiebeling's latest figures on food prices.

MR. SALISBURY: All right. We'll be looking for you again a week from tomorrow, Ruth. And now let me give the titles of those bulletins Miss Van Deman mentioned in her September miscellany. First I think she spoke of "Meat Dishes at Low Cost". And I might add, it has about 60 recipes for very good inexpensive ways of using meat. I know because we've tried out several of them at home. So first - "Meat Dishes at Low Cost", and second, "Homemade Bread, Cake, and Pastry". If you want these bulletins of the Bureau of Home Economics - "Meat Dishes at Low Cost", and "Homemade Bread, Cake, and Pastry" - send a card to the Department of Agriculture, here in Washington, D. C.

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